

Chapter 3 - Student Assessment and Evaluation

If teachers [of the gifted and talented] think of their time with students as a conversation, then assessments are perhaps one of the most potent means of communication. Through assessment, teachers [of the gifted and talented] say to their students what they think is or is not important learning.

—James Gallagher
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Introduction

Along with specifying curriculum and instruction requirements, Regulation 43-220 calls for assessment that maximizes the potential of identified students (24 S.C. Ann. Regs. 43-220.2 (A)(1)(a) and 2(A)(2)). Assessment involves the collection and organization of data related to student performance. Evaluation involves using assessment data to determine how well a student is performing in relation to pre-established criteria. The purposes of this chapter are two-fold: (1) to describe ways of assessing student achievement of gifted and talented curriculum goals and (2) to present methods of analyzing assessment data to evaluate student performance.

The discussion of assessment and evaluation in this chapter incorporates the following principles:

1. Student assessment is an integral part of curriculum design and of each instructional unit.
2. The assessment tools used for a particular curriculum objective must be appropriate for the measurement of that objective.
3. The criteria which students are expected to meet in their performance must be presented at the beginning of instruction.

Ways of Assessing Student Achievement

Pre-Assessment Strategies

It is imperative for teachers to determine prior to instruction what students already know and can do. Only by assessing a student's current level of knowledge and skill can a teacher ensure that new learning will take place as a result of instruction. Teachers can pre-assess content knowledge and skills through a variety of strategies such as those listed below.

Pre-Assessment of Content Knowledge

- ◆ Oral questioning
- ◆ Brainstorming
- ◆ Concept maps (See pages 3-5 and 3-6.)
- ◆ “Need to Know” boards (See pages 3-6 and 3-7.)
- ◆ Checklists
- ◆ Conventional written tests

Pre-Assessment of Skills

- ◆ Portfolio reviews
- ◆ Performance tasks
- ◆ Examination or assessment of previous products
- ◆ Review of previous assessments of the skill

Assessment During Instruction

Assessment must be ongoing throughout the instructional process. Teachers collect assessment data through observing and monitoring student progress toward instructional goals. Strategies appropriate for this stage of the assessment process include those listed here.

- ◆ Observation of student involvement/interaction
- ◆ Oral questioning
- ◆ Monitoring of student practice
- ◆ Formative measure that is scored for diagnostic purposes, but not graded
- ◆ Spot checks of products in progress (not graded)
- ◆ Collection of work samples

Students should be active participants in monitoring their progress during instruction. Accordingly, teachers should guide students through the process of self-assessment—looking at their strengths and weaknesses in relation to unit goals/objectives and setting appropriate personal goals for performance. Once goals have been set, students should check themselves throughout the unit to ascertain their progress toward achieving these goals. Students can use self-assessment strategies such as those listed below.

- ◆ Learning logs or journals
- ◆ Self-checklists
- ◆ Conferencing with the teacher
- ◆ Peer review groups

Post-Assessment Strategies

To determine student progress at the conclusion of a unit of study or at specific points in a lengthy unit, the teacher should use post-assessment strategies that are consistent with the instruction provided. Post-assessment strategies must also be consistent with the assessment strategies used before and during instruction. Presented here are just a few examples of assessment strategies that teachers and students can use to culminate an instructional unit.

- ◆ **Written tests**

These should include student-constructed responses to open-ended questions that require analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

- ◆ **Concept maps** (See pages 3-5 and 3-6.)

These require students to design a visual representation of everything they now know about the unit topic. The post-assessment concept map can be compared with a pre-assessment map in order to determine student growth as a result of the instructional unit.

- ◆ **“Need to Know” boards** (See pages 3-6 and 3-7.)

The final column—“What Have I Learned?”—represents the culmination of the instructional unit.

- ◆ **Other graphic organizers**

There are many other graphic organizers that students can use to display their acquired knowledge—e.g., Venn diagrams, flow charts, matrices, spatial arrays, models, graphs, other diagrams and charts.

◆ **Performance tasks**

These tasks should require students to apply knowledge and skills acquired during the unit to a new problem, in a new situation, or in a different context.

◆ **Products, projects, and presentations**

These should require students to synthesize and transform unit learning, then communicate it effectively to a specified audience. Students should receive specific instruction in the techniques of design and construction needed for the particular type of product, project, or presentation.

◆ **Portfolios**

Most portfolios will include samples of student work completed during the unit. Samples should be arranged chronologically in order to show student progress through the course of the unit. Additional items to place in a portfolio include the following: relevant entries from student learning logs or journals, parent letters or accounts, documentation of interviews or volunteer work related to the unit content, narratives of fieldwork or out-of-class activities carried out by the student, and a bibliography of related reading completed by the student. The items included in the portfolio may be specified by the teacher and/or selected by the student. If items are student-selected, the portfolio should include a personal statement from the student explaining why each piece was chosen.

All of the assessment measures described here are criterion-referenced. These are the appropriate kinds of measures for assessing individual student progress toward mastery of specific goals or objectives. In contrast to these criterion-referenced measures, there are a number of standardized norm-referenced assessment measures—such as the *Metropolitan Achievement Tests* (MAT), *Stanford Achievement Tests* (SAT), *Terra Nova*, and *Iowa Tests of Basic Skills* (ITBS)—that can be used to identify a specific sample within a general population of students. Because norm-referenced tests have this purpose, such measures are appropriate for the identification of gifted and talented students, but they are not appropriate for the assessment of students' progress toward curriculum goals.

Ways of Evaluating Student Progress

After collecting assessment data, the teacher must evaluate the data in order to determine how the student is performing in relation to pre-established criteria. The articulation of performance or evaluation criteria is a crucial aspect of curriculum development. Evaluation criteria can address the degree of student understanding (with regard to knowledge acquisition) or the degree of student proficiency (with regard to skill development). In either case, evaluation criteria may focus on short-term progress or on growth over longer periods of time.

Evaluating Knowledge Acquisition

The most effective methods of evaluating knowledge acquisition involve comparing student responses on pre- and post-assessment measures. Pre- and post-assessments are essential for the evaluation of gifted and talented students. All too often, when pre-assessments are omitted, instruction focuses on content the students already know. Effective utilization of pre- and post-assessment comparisons can ensure that instruction focuses on new learning for the gifted and talented and, accordingly, that the culminating evaluation reflects real change in knowledge and understanding.

Using Pre/Post Test Comparisons

If written tests are used for pre- and post-assessments, the following series of questions can help to focus the evaluation on what students have learned and how well they can use the information to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate.

◆ **To what extent has the student increased command of the vocabulary, concepts, and information contained in the unit of study?**

1. How much of the vocabulary is the student able to use correctly?
2. How many of the key concepts can the student explain accurately?
3. How much of the essential unit information is the student able to incorporate accurately into written statements about the unit topic?

◆ **To what extent has the student's knowledge of the unit topic increased in depth and complexity?**

1. How well can the student use details to support generalizations?
2. How effectively can the student use unit content to analyze or address new situations, problems, or issues?
3. How well can the student evaluate or critique assertions of others in relation to unit content?

Pre/Post Comparisons of Concept Maps

If students have constructed concept maps at the beginning and end of the unit, the teacher can compare various characteristics of the maps to evaluate student growth in knowledge and understanding of unit content. Through concept maps, gifted and talented students should be able to demonstrate gains not only in the acquisition of content information but also in the depth and complexity of understanding. Such gains are evident in the pre- and post-assessment concept maps presented in the Sample Documents at the end of the chapter. (See Sample A, page 3-20).

Noted below are characteristics of pre- and post-assessment concept maps that can be compared in the evaluation process.

- ◆ Amount, accuracy, and significance of the content information or details that are included
- ◆ Appropriateness of the categories under which information or details are subsumed
- ◆ Complexity of categorization
- ◆ Number, accuracy, and significance of any other interrelationships shown by color, arrows, connecting lines, and/or illustrations
- ◆ Overall sophistication of conceptualization

Pre/Post Comparisons of “Need to Know” Boards

If students use “Need to Know” boards to record their learning over the course of an instructional unit, their responses in the three columns of the board—“What Do I Need to Know?”, “Where Do I Find It?”, and “What Have I Learned?”—provide evidence of student knowledge acquisition. Listed here are types of evidence that would be relevant for each column of a “Need to Know” board.

◆ “What Do I Need to Know?” Column

- Evidence of inquiry/curiosity (number of appropriate queries)
- Significance of queries in the context of the unit
- Evidence of queries above the fact/detail level
- Evidence of inquiry continuing as the unit progresses (e.g., new items/questions added as more content is learned)

◆ “Where Do I Find It?” Column

- Appropriateness of sources used
- Quality and variety of sources used
- Extent to which all possible resources for the unit have been utilized
- Evidence of persistence when initial sources do not provide adequate information

◆ **“What Have I Learned?” Column**

- Evidence of acquisition of new information
- Evidence of understanding of the significance of information in relation to the unit as a whole
- Evidence of a deepening understanding (e.g., through supported generalizations or insights)
- Evidence of complexity of understanding (e.g., through descriptions of underlying patterns or interrelationships of information)

In addition to providing information about knowledge acquisition, evaluation that addresses all columns of the “Need to Know” board can provide considerable information about how well the student is learning the skills needed for a self-directed study or inquiry.

Evaluating Skill Development

Establishing Performance Criteria

At the beginning of a unit of study that focuses on skill development, the teacher should present the criteria by which student performance will be evaluated. The criteria should vary with the skills to be assessed with a weighted emphasis on demonstrating knowledge and understanding of the skill. The sample criteria presented here might be appropriate for an instructional unit on the selection and construction of graphs to communicate research data.

Sample Performance Criteria - Graphing Research Data
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The type of graph is appropriate for the data communicated.2. The graph is properly constructed.3. The graph is properly labeled and titled.4. The graph displays the data clearly, correctly, and without distortion.5. The graph makes effective use of visual elements.6. The student summarizes and hypothesizes using the graph in class discussions.

Designing or Selecting Rubrics

Teachers should incorporate performance criteria into a scoring rubric that will be used for evaluation purposes at the end of the unit. The scoring rubric—which should be explained to students along with the performance criteria—indicates levels of proficiency in relation to each criterion. Shown here are two possible rubric formats for the graphing criteria. Format 1 provides a numerical score (1, 2, 3), signifying a specified achievement level while Format 2 provides a letter grade (E, S, N) for each criterion. Comments regarding the student’s performance relative to the criterion should be provided for complete feedback to the student.

Sample Rubric – Graphing Research Data - Format 1			
Performance Criteria	Needs Improvement	Satisfactory	Exemplary
1. Appropriate type of graph.	1	2	3
2. Properly constructed.	1	2	3
3. Properly labeled and titled.	1	2	3
4. Clear, correct display of data.	1	2	3
5. Effective use of visual elements.	1	2	3
6. Oral presentation accurate.	1	2	3

Sample Rubric – Graphing Research Data - Format 2		
E = Exemplary, S = Satisfactory, N = Needs Improvement		
Performance Criteria	Grade	Comments
1. Appropriate type of graph.	E	<i>Best type of graph for your data.</i>
2. Properly constructed.	N	<i>Use a protractor to divide your circle graph rather than estimating visually.</i>
3. Properly labeled and titled.	E	<i>Excellent labels and titles.</i>
4. Clear, correct display of data.	S	<i>Use of protractor would help accuracy.</i>
5. Effective use of visual elements.	E	<i>Nice color choice. Good contrast.</i>
6. Oral presentation accurate.	E	<i>Great summary explanation</i>

Other types of skill development may suggest different styles of scoring rubrics. For example, for a short story unit that focuses on literary interpretation skills, a teacher might utilize the sample scoring rubric shown below. In this sample, three criteria are denoted. The scoring rubric provides qualitative descriptions of three levels of proficiency for each criterion, along with a corresponding point value for each level. Note that the point values for more proficient work are significantly higher than the point values for more limited student responses.

Sample Scoring Rubric – Literature Interpretation	
1. States the main idea of the reading selection in a sentence or two.	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited response that fails to capture the main idea (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Statement about story lacking elaboration or synthesis (10 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Clear statement, indicating insight into theme (15 pts.)
2. Explains the significance of the following sentence: [sentence from the reading selection]	<input type="checkbox"/> Limited response (1 point) <input type="checkbox"/> Accurate but literal response (5 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive response (10 pts.)
3. Explains the author’s treatment of change and supports explanation with detail from the story.	<input type="checkbox"/> Vague or limited response (5 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Valid, understandable generalization about change supported with at least two details from the story (10 pts.) <input type="checkbox"/> Valid, sophisticated (for age) statement or generalization about change, well-supported with evidence from the story (15 pts.)

All scoring rubrics should specify the evaluation criteria, describe levels of performance, and provide feedback on areas of strength and areas for growth. Rubrics used with the gifted and talented should set performance standards at sufficiently high levels so that advanced students are challenged to grow and to refine their skills to the greatest extent possible.

Using Exemplars

A key to effective implementation of scoring rubrics is the use of exemplars—samples of student products or responses that illustrate the levels of proficiency described by the rubric. Exemplars can assist in the development of consistency among teachers in evaluating student work. In addition, exemplars can serve as models for students. By studying exemplars, students can see work of varying degrees of proficiency and begin to establish a sense of the quality of their own work and the changes they need to make to raise their level of performance.

Evaluating Growth Over Time

Sometimes evaluation focuses on the quality of a student product or performance following a relatively short unit of study (e.g., several weeks or a month). At other times, evaluation focuses on how the student has grown in understanding or proficiency over an extended period of time. Many of the goals of gifted and talented programs—e.g., the development of research skills, the development of problem-solving skills, the development of communication skills—require evaluation of the student’s development over the course of a year or even over a period of years.

Developing an Evaluation Plan

The evaluation of growth in student achievement over an extended period of time requires the development and implementation of a specific evaluation plan. When establishing such a plan, the teacher should identify those curriculum goals for which the focus is student growth over time. The plan should articulate evaluation procedures for each goal, specifying the following:

- ◆ the time period over which student growth will be evaluated;
- ◆ the developmental stages—and levels of proficiency at each stage—through which students can be expected to move during the designated time period;
- ◆ a list of checkpoints at which student achievement will be assessed and evaluated;
- ◆ descriptions of the documentation of student achievement or performance level that will be collected at each checkpoint.

Sample B (page 3-21) provides an example of an evaluation plan that could be used for one component of the research skills goal—constructing a bibliography. Included in the sample plan are each of the components listed above: time period, developmental stages, checkpoints, and documentation.

Using Portfolios

Teachers can use portfolios for assessment and evaluation at all levels of instruction and in a variety of subject areas. The portfolio is an excellent tool for documenting student growth—particularly growth in those performance dimensions that may take months or years for change to occur. A portfolio provides samples of a student's work over time, stored in either a paper file or an electronic file.

To be most effective for evaluation purposes, a portfolio should contain the following elements:

- ◆ a clear statement of purpose or rationale agreed upon by student and teacher;
- ◆ a table of contents;
- ◆ work samples selected by the student and/or the teacher;
- ◆ evaluations of the student's work samples;
- ◆ the student's explanation of any student-selected samples;
- ◆ periodic (e.g., semester or yearly) growth goals set by the student or by the student and teacher.

Using the Evaluation Conference

A three-way (student, teacher, parent) conference can be another useful component of an evaluation plan. (See Evaluation of Growth in Sample B, page 3-17.) In such a conference, the student, teacher, and parent meet to review the documentation of the student's growth. They analyze the student's current performance level, the amount and quality of change since the previous conference, and areas that should be targeted for future growth.

As students become accustomed to three-way conferences, they can gradually assume greater responsibility for conducting the conference. The student-conducted conference has the added benefit of promoting self-evaluation and goal setting, two skills that are fundamental if students are to become self-directed learners.

Reporting Student Progress

Methods of reporting student progress will vary depending upon the program model and the curriculum. All gifted and talented programs should utilize reporting procedures that are appropriate to their delivery models and curricula. (See Chapter 4 of this manual for a description of program delivery models.) Regardless of the reporting methods used, all gifted and talented programs should go beyond simple grade reporting to provide more detailed information relative to student achievement and growth.

Report Cards and Grading Practices

Gifted and talented students served in special class or special school models should receive the same report cards as other students in the school district. These reports should use the district grading system and be sent home on the regular district schedule. Grades should reflect evaluation of the gifted and talented student's achievement of the special class or special school curriculum goals. In addition to these traditional report cards, gifted and talented students should receive more specific information regarding their progress in relation to the special class or special school goals—e.g., through checklists or teacher narratives.

Programs for gifted and talented students in a resource room/pull-out class or center vary in their grading procedures, the kinds of reports sent home, and the frequency of reporting (weekly, grading period, semester, or end of unit). Some programs use the district grading system, while others have developed their own grading systems.

An effective program establishes a reporting schedule at the outset of the school year so that parents know when to expect information on their students' achievement.

Exemplary Reporting Practices

Gifted and talented programs that are using best practices have a reporting system which communicates student progress on a regular basis. The reporting system should include a profile of student knowledge and proficiency in relation to gifted and talented curriculum goals.

An effective gifted and talented program utilizes more extensive reporting procedures than the traditional report card. Even when traditional report cards are used, as in a special class model, they should be supplemented with one or more of the reporting practices listed below.

- ◆ Evaluation reports on special products and performances
- ◆ Student self-reports in which the student reports to the teacher and parent his/her progress relative to specific learning goals
- ◆ Unit evaluations that communicate the student's level of skill proficiency and/or knowledge acquisition relative to unit objectives
- ◆ Gifted and talented program progress report listing curriculum goals and indicating the student's level of achievement for each
- ◆ Annual longitudinal growth conference in which the student, teacher, and parent discuss the student's growth over time

Review of Placement

The results of student assessment and evaluation may prompt questions about the appropriateness of a student's placement in the gifted and talented program. A student who finds work difficult and/or who performs poorly may seek to leave the gifted and talented program—perhaps out of concern about grade-point average or because of doubts about his/her abilities. A teacher may want a student who performs at a relatively low level to be removed from the program—perhaps because of questions about whether the student is “truly gifted and talented.” These judgments about the student and his/her abilities may or may not be valid.

Effective gifted and talented programs have clearly established and written procedures for reviewing student placement, in order to insure the following:

1. that students who do need gifted and talented programming are provided with the support they need to succeed, and
2. that students who may be mismatched with a particular class or service can have their placement adjusted to better meet their needs.

Procedures for Review of Placement

Best practices in gifted and talented education require that the individual student and his/her academic and intellectual development be the focus of all placement discussions, including the possible removal of a student. Any procedures that a district develops for reviewing a student's placement must incorporate a “child study” approach involving the gifted and talented program coordinator, student, parent/guardian, and teacher(s). The school or district Evaluation/Placement Team that carries out the evaluation step in the initial identification process shall also be involved in the review process (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.2(B)(8)(c)).

Placement decisions resulting from a child study should have as their primary consideration the best instructional setting for the individual student. Sample C (page 3-22) illustrates a set of district procedures that could be used for reviewing a placement, including appropriate questions for the Evaluation/Placement Team.

Often situations which prompt a student, parent, or teacher to request review of a student's placement in the gifted and talented program are ones that can be addressed through conferencing and provision of appropriate support services rather than through withdrawal or removal of the student from the program. A child study conducted by an Evaluation/Placement Team can be helpful to the student, parent, and teacher by clarifying the situation, making recommendations for regular classroom modifications, and providing appropriate support services for the student.

Guidelines for Removal of Students

The gifted and talented program exists to provide services to identified students that will develop their unique talents and abilities. Participation in an educational program that goes beyond the services provided by the regular classroom/school program should allow these students to achieve their potential. Identified students have demonstrated high performance ability or potential and therefore have the right to these additional services. Moreover, the services provided for identified students must match their area(s) of strength(s)—the way a student qualified for gifted and talented. Gifted and talented students are sometimes twice exceptional or underachievers. Therefore, the denial of services to a student who has qualified for gifted and talented requires careful attention and serious consideration.

Regulation 43-220 required the State Department of Education (SDE) by January 1, 2005, to develop criteria for procedures for removing a student from the gifted and talented program. The regulation also requires districts to develop appropriate written procedures that are consistent with the SDE criteria for removing a student from the gifted and talented program (24 S.C. Code Ann. Regs. 43-220.II.(B)(8)(c)). The Evaluation Placement team is responsible for developing these procedures and for final decisions relative to removal of a student from the program.

Removal is defined as discontinuing the participation of a student in the program. Prior to removal from a gifted and talented program, a student must be placed on probation.

Probation is defined as critically examining and evaluating the performance of a student with prescribed interventions for a period of time while the student remains in the program.

Both probation and removal require appropriate counseling with the student and documented conferences with the student, the student's parent(s), and teachers. Records of any assessment, evaluative measures, and other relevant student information must be maintained in a confidential manner.

Removal from the Pullout/Resource Room

Gifted and talented students served in the pullout/resource room program model often experience management problems as they learn to maintain and balance the responsibilities of the regular classroom and the resource room. The skills and strategies to function successfully in these two environments must be taught. Students should not be expected to navigate between these two educational settings without the support of the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource teacher. Frequent

interactions and joint planning between the classroom teacher and the pullout/resource room teacher are critical to the success of students.

In planning for a student to be successful in a pullout/resource room program model, the district must provide

- curriculum in the resource room that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student and
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the pullout/resource room.

Also, the district must have written policy addressing the essential assignments that must be completed when a student is absent from the regular classroom because of participation in the pullout/resource room program. This policy should establish

- additional time to complete the essential regular classroom assignments (i.e. Assignments missed in the regular classroom and newly assigned homework are not both due the next day.) and
- a process for defining, explaining, and providing in writing the essential assignments to the student.

Neither of the above should not create a punitive environment for the student.

Similar written policy should address assignments that must be completed as part of the gifted and talented pullout/resource room program.

Research on the performance of students in South Carolina's pullout/resource room program models suggests that students need two complete years in the program to make the adjustments of working in a regular classroom and pullout/resource room. To remove a child prior to two years of active participation in a pullout/resource program is a questionable action without substantive concerns for the student's physical, emotional, or social health.

Criteria for Removal from a pullout/resource room program

1. A child has completed two years in the program, and performance in the regular classroom and/or the pullout/resource room has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teachers, and parent(s) have been conducted and documented.
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).
4. Regular counseling has been provided by the school's guidance counselor to support the student during the probation period.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Performance on PACT is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
7. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
8. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.

9. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Removal from the Special Class or Special School Program Model

Gifted and talented students served in the special class or special school program model are engaged with a curriculum that reflects acceleration and enrichment in a specific discipline. Both the special class and special school model recognize that students display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not in others.

To be successful in the special class model, a gifted and talented student must be placed in a special class that corresponds with the strength(s) of the learner. For example, it would be inappropriate to place a child in a language arts special class if a child's only strengths were non-verbal/quantitative and mathematical.

To be successful in the special school model, a gifted and talented student must be provided with classes that correspond with the strength(s) of the learner and classes that compensate for and support academic weaknesses of the learner. As stated earlier, gifted and talented students may display high ability or potential in some academic areas but not necessarily in all academic areas.

In planning for a student to be successful in a special class or special school program model, the district must provide students with

- a special class or special school that is a match with the strength area(s) of the student;
- curriculum for the special class or special school that is differentiated and articulated in a written scope and sequence;
- teachers with the ability and necessary resources to differentiate instruction within the academic area(s);
- processes and strategies for gathering diagnostic data on student performance level(s) and monitoring student performance; and
- policies regarding assignments that must be completed as part of the special class program.

If a student is removed from a special class or special school and returned to the regular class or school, the ability of the student to perform adequately in the special class or special school must be addressed. Adequate performance must not be measured solely by grades. Careful consideration must be given to providing academic support, accommodating learning styles, ensuring a curriculum match with the student's strengths, addressing motivational issues, and attending to any social, emotional, or physical concerns that might affect student performance.

Criteria for Removal from a special class or special school program

1. A child has completed a minimum of one report card grading period but no more than a semester in the special class or special school, and performance has not been acceptable by both the parent(s) and the teacher(s).
2. Regular conferences with the student, teacher(s), and parent(s) have been conducted and documented throughout the grading period(s).
3. Specific strategies for supporting and improving student performance have been implemented and monitored by the student, parent(s), and teacher(s).
4. General counseling to support the student has been provided regularly by the school's guidance counselor.
5. Grade point average is not the sole indicator for removal under most circumstances.
6. Poor behavior is not the sole indicator under most circumstances.
7. A student's social, emotional, or physical health is a factor related to removal from the program.
 8. The student and parent(s) are advised that the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Removal of a Student by a Parent

If a parent wishes to remove his or her child from the gifted and talented program, the parent should complete a "Request for Removal" form specifying the reasons for this request. A sample form is provided. This form will be given to the district coordinator of gifted and talented programs who will conduct a meeting of the Evaluation Placement team with the student, parent, and teacher present. The Evaluation Placement team will have the final authority for approving or denying the request. When responding to the request of a parent, the same criteria for removal should be applied whenever possible. If a student is removed from the gifted and talented program at the request of a parent, the student may return to full participation in the gifted and talented program at the beginning of the next school year. The student is not required to requalify for participation.

Parent/Guardian Request for Removal of Student from the Gifted Program

I request that my child _____, be removed from the gifted and talented program. I understand that if my child is removed from the gifted and talented program, he/she may not participate for the remainder of this current school year. Further, I understand that my child will not be required to requalify for service in the gifted and talented program and will be eligible to return for service at the beginning of the next school year. It is my responsibility to advise the school if I wish for my child to return to the gifted and talented program since he/she will have missed a significant portion of the curriculum designed for gifted and talented students.

I am requesting the removal of my child for the following reason(s):

I understand that the Evaluation and Placement team for the gifted and talented program will review this request and notify me in writing of a date and time to discuss this request.

Date

Signature of Parent

Name of Student _____

School _____ Grade _____

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Sample Documents

Sample A - Sample Concept Maps (Pre- and Post-Assessment)

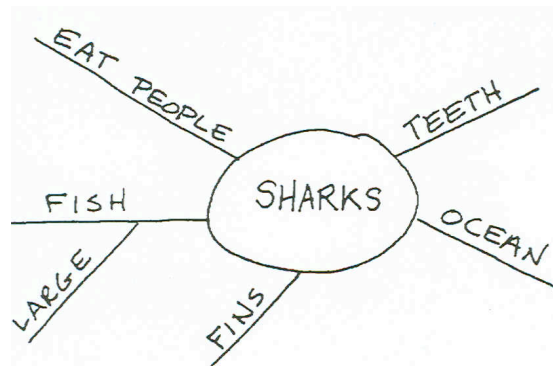
Grade Level: 4

Instructional Unit: Independent Study

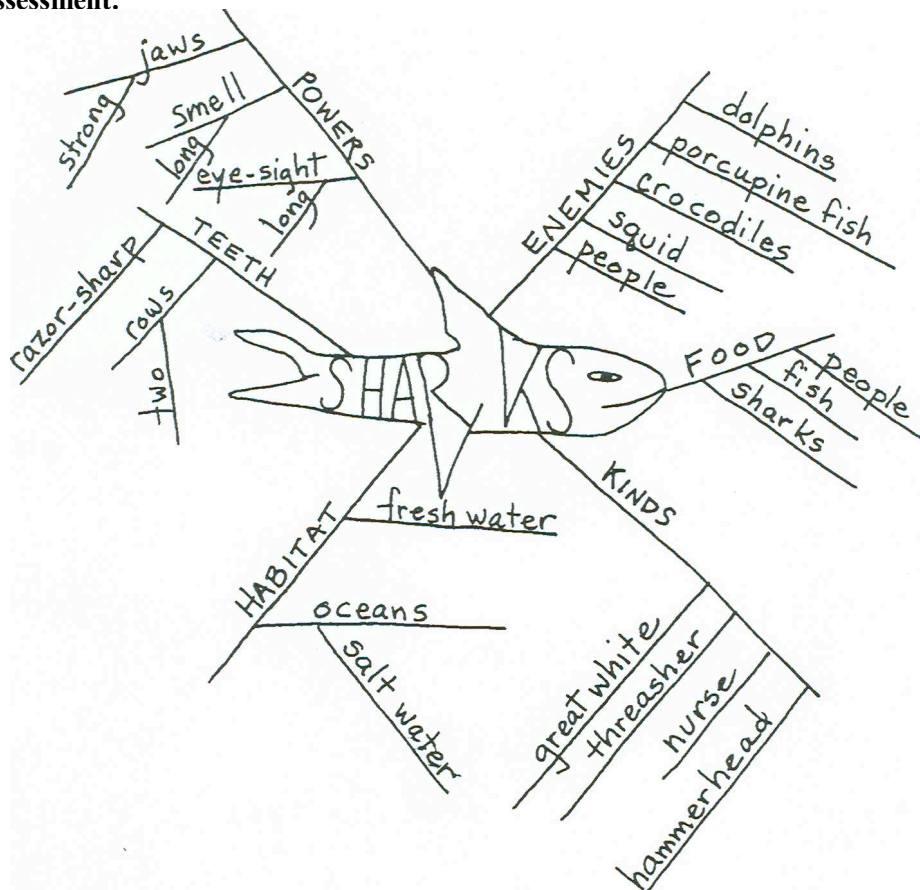
Student: (No prior experience in concept mapping)

Curriculum Theme: Power

Pre-Assessment:



Post-Assessment:



Sample B

Sample Evaluation Plan – Constructing a Bibliography	
Time Period: Growth from Grade 3 through Grade 10	
Developmental Stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> No bibliography<input type="checkbox"/> Author and title on note cards<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography specifying author and title in correct style<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography specifying author, title, publisher, place of publication, and date of publication in correct style<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography containing complete entries in correct style for books, periodical articles, encyclopedia articles, electronic and audio-visual materials<input type="checkbox"/> Written bibliography containing complete entries in correct style for all of the above, plus interviews, observations, experimental data, electronic data, surveys, and other sources<input type="checkbox"/> Written annotated bibliography which meets all criteria listed above	
Checkpoints: <p>The student's bibliography will be assembled and evaluated each year at the conclusion of the student's annual research project.</p>	
Documentation: <p>The student will develop a bibliography portfolio. This may be either a paper file or an electronic file. Each year, the student will add to the portfolio a copy of the bibliography produced for that year's research project and the scoring rubric which shows the evaluation of the student's level of proficiency at that point.</p>	
Evaluation of Growth: <p>Every year after the first year, the student will explain in a parent/teacher/student conference how he/she has grown from the previous checkpoint and what he/she plans to do to continue to grow from the current level of performance. The goals for growth set at each conference will be included in the student's portfolio.</p>	

Sample C

Sample District Procedures for Review of Placement
<p>Withdrawal Requests:</p> <p>If a student wishes to withdraw from the gifted and talented program, he/she will complete a “Request for Withdrawal” form specifying the reason(s) for the request. The form will be given to the coordinator, and the coordinator will initiate the review process.</p> <p>A parent or guardian who wishes to withdraw his/her student from the gifted and talented program will complete a “Request for Withdrawal” form and give it to the coordinator. The coordinator will initiate the review process.</p>
<p>Requests for Review of Placement:</p> <p>A teacher who feels that a student may be misplaced in the gifted and talented program may complete a “Request for Review” form and give it to the coordinator. The coordinator will initiate the review process.</p>
<p>Review Process:</p> <p>Upon receiving a withdrawal request or a request for review of placement, the coordinator will schedule a conference with the initiating party to gather additional information about the request. The coordinator will schedule other conferences and gather other information as needed to develop a full picture of the student’s situation. The coordinator will schedule a meeting with the Evaluation/Placement Team to share the data collected and initiate a child study involving the student, parent/guardian, and teacher(s). Appropriate questions for the Evaluation/Placement Team are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the reason for the request?• Do the curriculum and instructional strategies match the student’s needs?• Are the needs of the student being met in the regular classroom?• Is excessive homework a contributing factor?• Are there any underlying factors that need to be addressed?<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ motivation?◆ academic strength/class mismatch?◆ skill deficits or content knowledge deficits?◆ lack of access to resources (e.g., materials, library)?◆ study skill deficits?◆ time-management problems?◆ learning style mismatch?◆ other?• How can the situation be addressed through provision of support services?• What interventions will be implemented and what time frame will be established?• Is an adjustment in placement warranted? If so, what is the best placement for the student?